

REMARKS

Claims 11-17 are pending in the application. Claims 11, 15, and 16 are in independent form. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Reconsideration is respectfully requested of the rejection of Claims 11-17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,434,134 (“La Porta”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,069,050 (“Yoshida”).

It is respectfully submitted that Yoshida does not qualify as prior art against the present application. This is because the filing date of the priority application JP 2003-082830 of the present application is March 25, 2003, and is earlier than May 21, 2003, the U.S. filing date of Yoshida.

A certified English translation of the Japanese priority application 2003-082830 of the present application is submitted herewith.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 11-17 are patentably distinct over the cited references.

In view of the remarks set forth above, and the filing of the certified English translation of the Japanese priority application 2003-082830, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Favorable reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Docket No.: FUJX 20.963 (100794-00558)

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